# Fall Turkey Hunter Questionnaire 2003

By Jessica Kitchell

#### **Abstract**

Approximately 74% of all fall turkey hunters receiving a harvest permit hunted turkeys during the 2003 fall turkey season. The overall success rate for active hunters was 31.9%. Statewide, the average number of days spent hunting for fall turkeys was 3.9; hunting pressure was highest on weekends. Most turkeys were harvested from the southwestern region of the state. The most commonly used method of hunting fall turkeys was ambushing from concealment. Most hunters (56.3%) would like to see the number of available permits for hunting turkeys within the zone they hunted to remain unchanged. Most hunters (82.6%) felt the number of turkeys in the zone they hunted increased or stayed the same compared to the previous year. Overall satisfaction with the Wisconsin Wild Turkey Program remained high.

#### <u>Methods</u>

A sample of fall turkey hunter names and addresses was drawn from the current fall turkey hunter permit file. A survey was mailed to 6,000 fall turkey hunters after the completion of the fall turkey season. The questionnaire was mailed in proportion to the number of permits distributed in each zone. The questionnaire asked each hunter specific questions about their fall turkey hunting experience (Figure 1). A second mailing was made to 3,000 of the non-respondents. Data from all returned questionnaires were entered into the DNR UNIX production server and summarized using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS). The current fall turkey hunting zones were also grouped into regional areas (Figure 2). The regions were created from zones that had similar turkey populations, hunter densities, and habitat. These regions were created so that responses could be pooled to increase the response rates in some of the less hunted zones.

#### Results

A total of 3,352 hunter surveys were returned. After duplicate responses were removed, the corrected response rate was 55.9%. Approximately 68% of respondents have fewer than 5 years fall turkey hunting experience; 24% have between 6 and 10 years experience; 6% have between 11 and 15 years hunting experience, and only 2% have 16 or more years of experience (Table 1, Question 1).

Statewide, 74.4% of the respondents hunted turkeys this fall (Table 1, Question 2). Fall turkey hunters were asked to report the days on which they hunted for turkeys during the 2003 season. Hunting pressure was high on the weekends, with 61% of days in the field being a Saturday or Sunday. Statewide, the average number of days spent hunting for fall turkeys was 3.9 (Table 1, Question 3).

Fall hunter success, based on turkey harvest registration data, was 15.6%. This is uncorrected for nonhunters and is probably a low estimate. Statewide, 31.1% of the respondents from the questionnaire harvested a turkey this fall; 749 harvested 1 turkey, and 23 harvested 2 turkeys (Table 1, Question 4). This success rate may be high because hunters who were successful may have been more likely to return the survey than hunters who were unsuccessful. Successful hunters were asked how many hours it took to kill a turkey; the most frequent

(33.5%) response was >10 hours, with a statewide mean of 10.8 (Table 1, Question 4a). Active hunters were asked if they hit any turkeys they were unable to retrieve; 4.1% were unable to find their bird. Seven hunters reported hitting 2 or more birds (Table 1, Question 5).

Hunters were asked what weapon they used most, and what weapon they used to kill their turkey. Approximately eighty-three percent (82.9%) of respondents who hunted said that they used a gun to hunt fall turkeys, while 96.5% said that they used a gun to harvest a fall turkey (Table 1, Question 6).

The most commonly used method to hunt fall turkeys was ambushing from concealment (36.1%; Table 1, Question 7). Still hunting/stalking was the next most commonly used hunting method (29.9%). Incidental to other hunting was the least utilized hunting method (0.6%). The mean number of turkeys seen by hunters afield while hunting was 29.5 (Table 1, Question 8).

The percentage of survey respondents who reported the presence of other hunters interfering with their fall turkey hunting was 9.9%. Respondents reported archery deer hunters as the most common cause of interference. The second and third most common source of interference were small game hunters and gun deer hunters, respectively (Table 1, Question 9).

Just over one-ninth (11.7%) responded to "other hunters kept me from hunting where I wanted to" with 'definitely yes,' or 'somewhat.' Similarly, 6.7% of respondents answered "there was too much competition from other hunters where I hunted" with 'definitely yes,' or 'somewhat.' Only 6.9% of the respondents indicated that other hunters interfered with their chance to bag a bird (Table 1, Question 10).

The number of hunters who rated their hunting experience as "Fairly High" or "Very High" was 44.9%. This was greater than the hunters who rated their hunt as "Fairly Low" or "Very Low", 17.8% (Table 1, Question 11).

Hunters were asked to rate several factors that influenced their perception of a "quality" fall turkey hunt. The most important factor leading to a "quality" turkey hunt was seeing turkeys. The next most important factor was an opportunity to kill a turkey. The least important factor was weather (Table 1, Question 12).

Most hunters (56.3%) would like to see the number of permits available in the zone they hunted remain unchanged, while 42.4% would like to see the number of permits increased (Table 1, Question 13). Most hunters (82.6%) felt the number of turkeys in the zone they hunted increased or stayed the same from the year before (Table 1, Question 14).

Respondents were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the Wisconsin Wild Turkey Program. Over 65% responded as 'very satisfied' or 'somewhat satisfied,' and 25.1% responded as 'satisfied.' Only 6.5% responded as 'somewhat dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' (Table 1 Question 15).

 Table 1. Responses to the 2003 Fall Turkey Hunter Questionnaire.

1. How many years of fall turkey hunting experience do you have? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
0-5	71.3	66.5	86.0	74.6	73.7	50.5	67.8
6-10	22.4	28.4	11.6	19.8	20.2	32.6	24.1
11-15	4.2	4.2	1.5	4.3	2.9	12.8	5.9
16+	2.2	0.9	0.9	1.3	3.2	4.1	2.2

2. Did you hunt turkeys this fall? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Yes	76.5	73.5	79.6	72.9	75.9	71.7	74.4
No	23.5	26.5	20.4	27.1	24.2	28.3	25.6

3. Please check all the days that you hunted for turkeys this fall: (Percent)

Date <sup>a</sup>	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Oct 11, 2003	9.1	7.2	7.6	7.5	6.4	7.8	7.6
Oct 12, 2003	6.8	5.7	6.2	6.2	5.5	6.2	6.1
Oct 13, 2003	2.1	1.9	2.3	1.2	2.6	1.5	1.9
Oct 14, 2003	1.6	1.7	2.1	2.0	2.2	1.5	1.8
Oct 15, 2003	1.2	1.8	2.1	2.5	1.9	1.3	1.8
Oct 16, 2003	1.8	1.7	2.2	2.0	2.2	1.5	1.9
Oct 17, 2003	2.8	2.3	3.0	2.7	3.2	2.7	2.7
Oct 18, 2003	7.2	7.4	8.0	6.8	7.0	8.6	7.6
Oct 19, 2003	5.7	5.6	6.1	5.9	6.2	7.4	6.2
Oct 20, 2003	1.7	1.5	1.9	1.5	1.0	1.3	1.5
Oct 21, 2003	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.9	1.3	1.7	1.6
Oct 22, 2003	2.1	1.7	2.4	2.4	2.1	1.8	2.0
Oct 23, 2003	1.6	1.8	2.2	2.0	2.3	1.7	1.9
Oct 24, 2003	2.7	2.9	2.5	3.0	3.0	2.5	2.7
Oct 25, 2003	7.2	7.3	6.9	6.9	6.7	7.0	7.0
Oct 26, 2003	5.5	5.6	5.7	6.0	5.7	5.6	5.7
Oct 27, 2003	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.5	1.4
Oct 28, 2003	1.8	1.5	1.2	1.6	1.4	1.3	1.5
Oct 29, 2003	2.1	1.7	1.8	2.5	1.8	1.7	1.9
Oct 30, 2003	2.0	2.6	1.9	1.5	1.9	2.5	2.1
Oct 31, 2003	3.3	3.4	2.5	2.3	2.8	3.1	2.9
Nov 01, 2003	6.1	6.6	5.5	5.3	5.8	6.5	6.0
Nov 02, 2003	4.2	5.1	4.6	4.8	5.5	4.6	4.8
Nov 03, 2003	1.5	1.8	1.1	1.7	1.4	1.2	1.4
Nov 04, 2003	1.4	1.5	1.1	1.4	1.8	1.4	1.4
Nov 05, 2003	1.7	1.8	1.4	2.1	2.0	1.5	1.7
Nov 06, 2003	1.7	2.2	1.9	2.0	2.4	1.7	2.0
Nov 07, 2003	2.8	3.1	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.5	2.7
Nov 08, 2003	5.1	5.3	5.5	5.6	5.4	5.8	5.5
Nov 09, 2003	4.1	4.6	4.8	4.6	4.6	5.0	4.7

<sup>a</sup>Boldfaced dates represent weekends.

# Weekday of hunting. (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Sunday	26.4	26.6	27.5	27.4	27.5	28.8	27.4
Monday	6.8	6.5	6.6	5.8	6.1	5.4	6.2
Tuesday	6.4	6.3	5.9	6.9	6.7	5.8	6.3
Wednesday	7.2	6.9	7.7	9.4	7.8	6.2	7.4
Thursday	7.2	8.3	8.3	7.6	8.8	7.4	7.9
Friday	11.6	11.6	10.6	10.6	11.7	10.8	11.1
Saturday	34.6	33.8	33.4	32.2	31.4	35.6	33.7

# Number of days spent hunting. (Mean)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Mean	3.8	3.9	4.5	3.7	4.0	3.6	3.9

# 4. Did you harvest a turkey this fall? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Yes	38.2	26.6	34.8	29.8	30.0	29.9	31.1
No	61.8	73.4	65.2	70.3	70.0	70.1	68.9

# If yes, how many? (Frequency)

Number of Turkeys	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
1	120	127	130	117	85	167	749 <sup>a</sup>
2	1	2	0	1	0	19	23

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> Three harvested from unknown region

# 4a. Approximately how many hours did it take to kill a turkey? (Percent)

Hours	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
<1	1.7	1.6	8.0	1.8	1.2	0.0	1.1
1-3	30.8	29.1	31.5	29.2	29.9	35.1	31.2
4-6	17.1	25.2	15.0	15.0	17.2	20.5	18.7
7-10	17.1	15.0	15.0	16.8	14.9	14.6	15.6
>10	33.3	29.1	37.8	37.2	36.8	29.7	33.5

# Number of hours to bag a turkey. (Mean)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Mean	10.8	8.9	13.2	11.2	11.7	10.0	10.8

5. Did you hit a turkey that you were unable to retrieve? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Yes	4.0	2.8	5.0	5.1	4.9	3.6	4.1
No	96.0	97.2	95.0	94.9	95.1	96.4	95.9

If yes, how many? (Frequency)

Number of Turkeys	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
1	10	11	17	15	12	21	87 <sup>a</sup>
2	1	1	0	1	1	1	5
>2	0	0	2	0	0	0	2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup>One from unknown region

6. What type of weapon did you use most while hunting turkeys this fall? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Gun	82.3	83.2	82.8	81.2	80.2	85.4	82.9
Bow	17.7	16.8	17.3	18.8	19.8	14.6	17.1

What type of weapon did you use to kill a turkey this fall? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Gun	98.4	97.1	95.5	97.5	95.6	95.4	96.5
Bow	1.6	2.9	4.5	2.5	4.4	4.6	3.5

7. Which of the following methods did you use most when hunting turkeys? (Percent)

Method	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Scatter a flock and called a bird back	3.5	2.7	3.4	3.1	3.1	4.3	3.4
Called a bird without scattering a flock	10.0	10.2	8.2	7.4	8.8	9.3	9.0
Ambush from concealment	32.4	39.9	37.5	35.0	37.1	34.3	36.1
Still hunt, stalking	33.6	25.4	30.5	29.3	29.3	31.6	29.9
Drives	1.6	1.9	1.6	4.5	2.6	3.2	2.6
Shoot from the roost	0.9	0.6	1.2	1.4	1.3	0.9	1.0
Incidental to archery hunting	13.7	16.1	13.4	16.1	14.8	12.2	14.2
Incidental to small game hunting	4.2	2.9	3.2	2.5	2.6	3.6	3.2
Incidental to other hunting	0.2	0.3	1.2	8.0	0.5	0.7	0.6

8. How many turkeys did you see while you were afield hunting turkeys? Do not include turkeys sighted from a vehicle. (Mean)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Mean	31.1	27.9	30.1	34.7	27.3	27.1	29.5

9. While you were afield this fall, did the presence of other hunters interfere with your turkey hunting? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Yes	9.5	10.3	9.2	7.1	13.5	10.7	9.9
No	90.5	89.8	90.8	93.0	86.5	89.4	90.1

If yes, what were the other hunters hunting? (Percent)

Hunting	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Archery Deer	37.0	37.3	30.0	35.1	32.1	17.1	30.1
Small Game	32.6	16.0	33.3	18.9	23.2	19.3	23.2
Turkeys	15.2	16.0	13.3	27.0	12.5	17.1	16.3
Gun Deer	4.4	17.3	15.0	13.5	12.5	28.4	16.9
Unknown	10.9	13.3	8.3	5.4	19.6	18.2	13.5

- 10. For each statement below, please check the response which best reflects your 2003 fall hunt. (Percent)
- Other hunters sometimes kept me from hunting where I wanted to.

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Definitely Yes	3.8	3.9	2.7	3.3	3.5	4.5	3.7
Somewhat	7.9	7.4	9.8	4.1	10.8	8.4	8.0
Not Much	23.5	15.1	20.1	19.6	16.7	17.0	18.2
No Never	64.8	73.6	67.5	73.0	69.1	70.1	70.1

• There was too much competition from other hunters where I hunted.

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Definitely Yes	1.3	2.1	1.1	1.0	1.7	2.1	1.6
Somewhat	4.1	5.6	6.5	3.1	7.0	4.9	5.1
Not Much	26.0	18.1	26.3	20.3	19.5	20.4	21.4
No Never	68.6	74.3	66.1	75.6	71.8	72.6	71.8

• Other hunters interfered with my chance to bag a bird.

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Definitely Yes	1.3	2.5	3.0	1.0	3.2	3.4	2.5
Somewhat	4.1	4.4	3.5	4.1	7.4	3.8	4.4
Not Much	21.6	13.9	17.6	11.7	14.4	14.7	15.4
No Never	73.0	79.3	75.9	83.2	75.1	78.1	77.8

11. Overall, how would you rate the quality of your Wisconsin fall wild turkey hunt this year? (Percent)

Rating	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Very High	21.3	19.3	19.6	20.4	20.3	20.1	20.1
Fairly High	25.1	21.5	26.0	22.9	29.7	25.4	24.8
Average	35.4	37.1	38.6	38.0	37.2	36.9	37.3
Fairly Low	12.2	13.9	10.2	13.1	9.7	11.7	11.9
Very Low	6.0	8.2	5.6	5.5	3.1	5.9	5.9

12. Please rate the factors that most influence your perception of a "quality" fall turkey hunt. Enter a value of 1 to 7 next to each statement, with "1" having the most effect and "7" having the least effect on you hunting experience. (Mean response)

Factor	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
An Opportunity to kill a turkey	3.1	2.8	2.8	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.0
Seeing turkeys	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.5
Killing a mature Tom	4.2	4.1	3.9	4.3	4.1	4.3	4.2
Killing a turkey (either sex)	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.0	3.9	4.2	4.0
Weather	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.3
Not seeing other hunters	4.6	4.0	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2
Spending time with friends and family	3.5	3.4	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.4	3.5

13. Would you like to see the number of permits available for the zone you hunted changed? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Increased	44.1	34.0	59.5	49.6	47.1	31.2	42.4
Stay the Same	54.7	65.0	38.9	49.1	52.2	66.9	56.3
Decreased	1.2	1.0	1.6	1.3	0.7	1.9	1.4

14. Do you feel that the turkey numbers have changed from last year in the zone you hunted this fall? (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Increased	43.3	33.3	54.3	47.1	47.4	26.3	39.8
Stay the Same	39.8	45.5	32.7	39.2	42.3	50.7	42.8
Decreased	12.7	16.5	8.4	9.4	6.5	17.9	12.8
Did not hunt same zone	4.1	4.8	4.6	4.3	3.8	5.0	4.5

15. Rate your overall satisfaction with the Wisconsin Wild Turkey Program. (Percent)

	С	EC	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Very Satisfied	46.7	47.6	45.0	49.8	53.8	52.3	49.4
Somewhat Satisfied	20.1	18.8	22.5	17.9	20.0	17.0	19.0
Satisfied	27.0	27.6	25.5	24.0	22.8	23.8	25.1
Somewhat Dissatisfied	4.1	5.2	5.6	5.6	3.5	5.5	5.0
Very Dissatisfied	2.2	0.8	1.3	2.8	0.0	1.5	1.5

State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

#### Wisconsin Fall Turkey Hunting Questionnaire

Section 23.09(2)(k), Wis. Stats Form 2300-203 (R 10/03)

Dear Turkey Hunter:

Please take a few moments to complete this survey. Questionnaires are important as a tool in providing information necessary to set permit levels and manage Wisconsin's turkeys in the best possible manner. This is an opportunity for us to receive your input so we can better serve you, the customer. Your name was selected from a list of fall turkey hunters to participate in this year's survey. Even if you didn't harvest a turkey or were unable to get out hunting this fall, your input is needed. Report on yourself only, not on your hunting party or family members. Completion of this survey is voluntary. All information that is provided will remain confidential and will not be used for any other purpose.

usestionnaire, tane the edge, and mail. Although postage is not required to return this

when finished, reverse the flap on the questionnaire, tape the edge, and mail. Although postage is not required to return this questionnaire, placing a stamp in the upper right-hand corner will allow more dollars to be put into habitat management and maintenance, to ensure the future of Wisconsin's wild turkeys.							
Thank you for taking the time to be a part of Wisconsin's successful wild turkey program.							
2. Did you hunt turkeys this fall?  Yes No							
IF YOU DID NOT HUNT, PLEASE STOP HERE AND RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE.  3. Please check all the days that you hunted for turkeys this fall:							
Monday, Oct. 27  Tuesday, Nov. 4  Tuesday, Oct. 28  Wednesday, Nov. 5  Wednesday, Oct. 29  Thursday, Nov. 6  Friday, Nov. 7  Friday, Oct. 31  Saturday, Nov. 1  Sunday, Nov. 2  Monday, Nov. 3							
7. Which of the following methods did you use most when hunting turkeys? (Please check ONE.)  Scattered a flock and called a bird back Called a bird without scattering a flock Ambush from concealment Still hunt, stalking Drives Shoot from the roost Incidental to other hunting: Bow deer Small game Other If another method, please explain:							

Figure 1. 2003 Fall Turkey Hunting Questionnaire.

# Wisconsin Fall Turkey Hunting Questionnaire Section 23.09(2)(k), Wis. Stats. Form 2300-203 (R 10/03)

				JU-203 (R 10/03)					
8.	How many turkeys did you see while you were afield hunting	13	3. Would	l you like to see the num	ber of permits available for the				
	turkeys? Do not include turkeys sighted from a vehicle.			zone(s) you hunted changed? (If your tags were for one zone, fill out one column only.)					
	Zone: Number of turkeys seen:		Zone:		Zone:				
_	Zone: Number of turkeys seen:	╛	=	creased	☐ Increased				
9.	While you were afield this fall, did the presence of other hunters interfere with your turkey hunting?			ny the same creased	Stay the same Decreased				
					. —				
	If yes, what were the other hunters hunting? (Check all that apply.)	1	14. Do you feel that the turkey numbers have changed from last year in the zone(s) you hunted this fall? (If your tags were for one zone, fill out one column only.)						
	Archery Deer Turkeys Unknown				Zone:				
	Small Game Gun Deer		$\square$ Inc	reased	Increased				
10.	. For each statement below, please check the response which	1		iyed the same	Stayed the same				
	best reflects your fall hunt.		_	creased	☐ Decreased				
,	Definitely Not No Yes Somewhat Much New	er 📙		d not hunt same zone	☐ Did not hunt same zone				
	Other hunters sometimes 168 Somewhat Much 1969 Stept me from hunting	15		our overall satisfaction v y Program. (Please check	with the Wisconsin Wild				
v	where I wanted to.		_ `		k one.)				
Т	There was too much			ry Satisfied newhat Satisfied					
	competition from other		_	isfied					
n	nunters where I hunted.		=	newhat Dissatisfied					
	Other hunters interfered		Ve	ry Dissatisfied					
	vith my chance to bag a \qquad \qqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqqq	Ė							
11	. Overall, how would you rate the quality of your Wisconsin	$\dashv$	Fall 2003 Wild Turkey Hunting Zones						
11	fall wild turkey hunt this year? (Please check ONE.)			2 45 4	NOTE: All state parks encept Mill Bull State Park are placed to Fall				
	☐ Very High		S	Trons 300	turkery hunting. Also, Blackhorn Wildlin Area A is diseas to Fall turkery hunting.				
	Fairly High		3500	" min	Closed to Hunting in Fall 2003				
	About Average			magas laser					
	Fairly Low	1,	20	1966	Post com				
_	☐ Very Low	46	TOTAL DES	S)					
12	E. Please rate the factors that most influence your perception of a "quality" fall turkey hunt. Enter a value of 1 to 7 next to		<del>-</del>						
	each statement, with "1" having the most effect and "7"	18	13 Julie 20	40 40					
	having the least effect on your hunting experience.	1	19	30 30 42					
	An opportunity to kill aWeather turkeyNot seeing other turkey	,	1		22 100 21 24				
	Seeing turkeys hunters		-	( ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )					
	Killing a mature TomSpending time with				23 33 33				
	Killing a turkey (either sex) friends and family	╝		1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	21 (10)				
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Figure 1. Continued.



Figure 2. Turkey Regions.